(b) the reasons for inordinate delay in starting the project;

(c) the initial works completed, so far, and the expenditure incurred on it; and

(d) the number of employees engaged, at present, for the proposed power project?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) to (c) NTPC Ltd. is setting up a coal based Thermal Power Project of 750 MW (3x250MW) at Salakati in Kokrajhar District (Part of Bodo Territorial Autonomous District) in Assam at the site of existing non-operational Bongaigaon Thermal power Station (4x60MW). In this regard, a transfer Agreement has been executed amongst NTPC Ltd., Government of Assam and Assam Power Generation Corporation Ltd. (APGCL) for transfer of the existing infrastructure of 240 MW (4x60MW) Bongaigaon Thermal Power Station of APGCL in Assam to NTPC Ltd. and setting up of new 3x250 MW power station at the same location by NTPC Ltd. Notification in respect of transfer of assets was issued by Government of Assam on 13.11.2007.

All necessary key inputs and clearances including environmental clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests have been tied-up/obtained for the project. Site specific studies have been completed. Preparation for commencement of main plant activities has started. Main Plant Equipment packages have been awarded on BHEL in February, 2008. Work on the project has already commenced.

Investment approval has been accorded by NTPC Board on 30.01.2008 at current estimated cost of Rs. 4375.35 crores and expenditure of Rs. 86.85 Lakhs has been incurred in the project so far.

(d) 16 employees have been posted at Bongaigaon Thermal Power Project as on 31.01.2008.

Funds for RGGVY

1814. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to provide electricity in every house under the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) by the end of Eleventh Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the fiscal allocation for this scheme in the Plan;

(c) whether Government would consider to include all Panchayat and local bodies to implement this scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) Government of India has approved the continuation of the scheme in eleventh Plan for attaining the goal for providing access to electricity to all households. Capital subsidy of Rs. 28.000 crores for electrification of about 1.15 lakh unelectrified villages and electricity connections to 2.34 crore BPL house holds has been sanctioned at this stage.

(c) and (d) The Panchayat institutions would be associated in the management of rural distribution through franchisees after completion of RGGVY works. RGGVY Guidelines have stipulated that electrification works under the sanctioned projects are to be executed on trun-key basis. The guidelines have also specified the qualification requirements for such turnke-key contractors. Panchayats and Local Bodies can also participate in such tenders in case they satisfy the stipulated qualifying requirements. The rural electrification policy has stipulated that "The Gram Panchayat/Village Council or equivalent shall issue

the first Certificate at the time of the village becoming eligible for declaring it "electrified". Subsequent to the village being declared as "Electrified", the Gram Panchayat shall certify and confirm the electrified status of the village as on 31st March each year."

Rural electrification under Bharat Nirman

1815. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had committed to provide electricity to 1,25,000 villages under the Bharat Nirman during the 2005-06 Budget presentation;

(b) if so, how many villages had been given electricity connections under this scheme;

(c) the number of villages yet to be given electricity connections, State-wise; and

(d) the reasons for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SHINDE): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government had envisaged electrification of about 1.25 lakh unelectrified Villages in the country under the RGGVY as part of Bharat Nirman.

(b) The implementing States/agencies have reported that electrification works have been completed in 76181 villages (including 30275 intensively electrified villages) as on 3rd March, 2008, State-wise details presented at Statement-I (*See* below).

(c) As per CEA report, out of 593732 inhabited villages (2001 census), 487351 villages are electrificed, leaving 106381 un-electrified villages as on 31.12.2007 in the country including UTs. State-wise status of village electrification is given at Statement-II (*See* below).

(d) The major reasons for not adhering to execution schedule in some cases are the following:

* Delayed participation by some of the States in submission of DPRs.
* Longer than the expected time taken by the States/implementing agencies in completing the pre-award activities.
* Slower than the expected speed of execution of post-award activities by implementing agencies.
* Geographical spread of the unelectrified villages including far flung areas.
* Very low population density in certain remote areas.
* Demand-supply gap for major equipments/materials.
* Dealay in finalization some list of BPL families by certain States.
* Cost overrun.